

7: Thompson--376  
116, 177, 167, 186, 464

J-4

(no date) 1937

Laotians

"It is obvious that the future development of the country, as in Cambodia, cannot depend on any but imported labour. As ever, it is the prolific and industrious Chinese and Annamites who are flowing into Laos to the economic betterment of the land, but equally to the moral distress of its people. Middle Laos, from Savannakhet to Vientiane, is the region most subject to infiltration. Upper and Lower Laos will probably be cut apart by a wedge of foreign colonizers. The French cannot but favour this immigration. Laos is a terrestrial paradise offering an easy living, undisputed by the timid Laotians, to the miserable Annamites from the over-crowded Tonkinese delta. The Laotians, like the Khmers, prefer to withdraw rather than to struggle with their old enemies. A terse Laotian proverb crystallizes this ancient antagonism: 'Dog and cat, Annamite and Laotian.' In addition to taking their land and their women the Annamite has introduced vices like gaming and theft, and diseases like tuberculosis and syphilis. The contempt of the industrious and formalistic Annamite for the lazy and carefree Laotian is only matched by the latter's impotent hatred. Yet the evil is without remedy. Rich, unoccupied land will inevitably attract an industrious and prolific people like the Annamites, who are able and willing to do what Laotians cannot and will not do."

10; d'Orleans--262 T-3

(1891-92) 1894

Laos

116, 167, 484, 563

Ethnic subgroups

"We accept an offer from a Thai family encamped upon a sand bank, who invite us to warm ourselves at their fire. We begin to talk and find that our hosts were forcibly deported from the plain of Dien Bien, and that, after ten years' absence, they are returning to their home. They have a pirogue and a raft made of bamboos tied together, which carries their animals, fowls and pigs; we leave them after buying some cocoa-nuts which they have brought from the south."

devoted to an illustration: "Junction of the Nam-Khane and the 643\*  
Mekong at Luang-Prabang." --Translator/ /183/ whom he had 595  
chosen in Luang-Prabang itself from the families of his mandarins. 175\*

#### KHAMONE-NOI, KING 1726-1727.

Khamone-Noi succeeded him and took as wives two of the dead /595/  
king's daughters, Thene-Sao and Thene-Kham. But Intha-Sorn at 175\*  
once began to agitate. Not daring to hope that the family of the 669  
Sip-Song-Pana's would lend him aid against one of its children, he 643\*  
addressed himself to some newcomers to the land who had been 563  
infiltrating for some time into the valley of the Nam-Ou. These /167/  
were the "Mousseux," mountainfolk driven out of Yunnan by the  
religious wars (1). Although their temperament was not at all war-

1. Violent Moslem rebellions were then devastating south-  
ern China.

like, these fugitives nevertheless agreed, since they had no choice, 721  
to lend their aid to Intha-Sorn. In return the latter promised their 643\*  
leaders La-Nga and Noli that he would recognize and confirm their 175\*  
occupation of Muong-Yo and Boun-Neua as soon as he became king. 669  
563

Submission of Intha-Sorn (1726). But the Mousseux (2), al-

2. The word "Mousseux" is the word which most nearly ap-  
proaches the native appellation. With their slender fig- /142/  
ures, their rather white coloration, their prominent cheek-  
bones and their well-shaped and not flattened noses, the  
"Mousseux" type has a greater affinity with the Indo-Euro-  
pean type than with the yellow race type.

though they were supported by Nha-No- '184/ Muong of Muong-La,  
failed in their march on Luang-Prabang and Intha-Sorn had no  
other recourse than to make his submission. He gave up his  
weapons, took an oath of obedience and fidelity in the pagoda of  
Xieng-Thong, and was given permission to live in the capital,  
where he settled near the Vat-Visoun with a large retinue of  
Mousseux.

He was quite determined not to keep his word. The king,  
moreover, was not at all worried and did not even have him watched.

648 In the meantime the carefree populace of Luang-Prabang lived  
175\* happy and at peace. This is at least the opinion of its annalists who,  
in confirmation of the adage which states that happy peoples have  
no history, begin and end their account of Souka-Seum's reign with  
this categorical assertion.

175\* The Meo Migration. It was about this time that the first migra-  
563 tion of "Meos" occurred in the principality. The chroniclers make  
167 no mention of it, doubtless because it was peaceful on the whole and  
did not affect the tranquillity of the Laotian peoples. Indeed, the  
newcomers settled on the highest summits of Tran-Ninh and Luang-  
Prabang, in completely uninhabited regions where even the Khas  
had never ventured and which were outside the scope of the natives  
and their leaders.

Farmers and caravaneers, the Meos were above all among the  
worst denuders of the forests. They must have been driven south out  
of Se-Tchouen and Yunnan by the need to find new territories which  
were rich in forests, and also by their undisciplined temperament  
which could not endure /213/ the authority of the Chinese mandarins.  
They settled first on the wooded peaks of the Houa-Phan and of  
Tonkin, then on those of Upper Laos where they found the same  
kind of habitat as in the cold lands which they had fled. Without  
religion, without priests, without writing and obedient only to  
sorcerers who held absolute sway over their essentially vain and  
credulous character, they lived there in small independent groups,  
laying waste to the forest in order to grow poppies and maintaining  
with the neighboring groups only those relations which were strictly  
indispensable to marketing their opium (1).

/113/ 1. Settlement by the Meos encountered more resistance in  
Tonkin. "I recall," writes Deo-van-Tri in his Memoires, -  
"having seen my country (Lai-Chau) invaded by the Meos  
who were called 'White Flags' about 1848. They disturbed  
the tranquillity of the land, but my honorable father Cam-  
Sinh finally came to an agreement with them and put them  
at liberty to settle wherever they wanted on the high plateaus  
of the region." In the following year, in order to spare his  
sons from violent family dissensions, Cam-Sinh entrusted  
Deo-van-Tri and his brother Cam-Heune to the king of  
Luang-Prabang, who placed them in a pagoda with his own  
children (Revue indochinoise, August 31, 1904.)

115: Le Boulanger--146 H-4 (no date) 1931 AM1 Indochina  
 (1700-1887) Laotians AM8  
 Ho

648\* attempt, moved with all haste towards the banks of the Mekong,  
 175\* followed by four thousand families and carrying off the archives  
 "in order to prevent any later pretexts to claims" (1).

1. Cf. Captain de Pelacot, *op. cit.* /"Le Tran-Ninh historique," *Revue indochinoise*, Hanoi, 1896. /

Annam reacted immediately and installed another Quan-Phu in Muong-Kham with two thousand men, but it had learned its lesson. The new delegate inaugurated an administration of flexibility and concessions, placed Chao-Pho, the eldest son of Chao-Noi, at his side, and after four years yielded all power to him (1855).

Chao-Pho did not remount his ancestors' throne, but took control of affairs with the simple title of the emperor's mandatory. Tiantha-Koumane, however, most probably at Bangkok's instigation, took the point of view that the kingdom of Xieng-Khouang had been reconstituted and demanded tribute.

Long negotiations ensued, in the course of which Chao-Pho maneuvered with sufficient skill to avoid any offense on the part of Luang-Prabang and any disavowal on the part of Annam. Finally Tran-Ninh paid /236/ ninety bars of silver to Emperor Tu-Duc every year and sent Luang-Prabang the traditional triennial bounty.

175\* Chao-Pho therefore restored comparative tranquillity to his  
 563 countrymen for a few years. Tu-Duc had come to grips with the  
 /167/ French and seemed to lose interest in Tran-Ninh's affairs, and the  
 memory of evil days was beginning to be blurred in the mists of the plateau ricefields which were once more being cultivated, when the first bands of "Hos" appeared whose devastations were to achieve the total ruin of the unfortunate principality.

First incursions of "Hos" (1864). Driven from China by the wars of Yunnan, these hordes of ravenous fugitives (1) suddenly poured

1. "Ho" means "Chinese" in the Thai dialect.

into northern Indo-China. Their invasions began about 1864 and were to unroll in successive waves for more than twenty years against the Sip-Song-Panas, Tonkin, the Houa-Phan, Tran-Ninh and as far as the gates of Luang-Prabang.

Laotian provinces, over which it exercised only nominal authority as yet (2). It must, however, combat the rights which Annam /161/

2. Even over the old principality of Vientiane, now three-quarters depopulated, where it had had the wisdom, or the weakness, to leave the old chiefs of muongs in charge of the government and had required of them only an oath of fidelity and the payment of personal and land taxes in the form of one large annual tribute. /631/

might one day be led to assert over these regions, and it must place them under military occupation so as to present the emperor Tu-Duc, and eventually the Quai d'Orsay, with a fait accompli without further delay. The great invasion of Tran-Ninh by the Hos was to furnish it a pretext in 1873.

/242/ Invasion of Tran-Ninh by the Hos (1872). A large band of "Red Flags," numbering about two thousand pirates who had been driven out of the Black River by the "Yellow Flags" towards the end of 1871, fell upon the plateau by way of Xieng-Ko, which it sacked despite the desperate resistance of the inhabitants, and entrenched itself in the island of Bandon near the village of Banban. A first column which Chao-Hung sent against it fled bravely at the first contact with the invaders, and since everything ends in a song in the land of Laos, their panic was at once turned to ridicule and put in couplets which are still sung today (1). 563 175\* /167/ /579/

1. The following is a translation of the first of these couplets: 539

Sanousit leaves his opium pipe which is lost.  
Sisania throws away his opium lamp.  
Chao-un-Vico abandons his Annamite gong.  
All is lost, all is thrown away.  
They hide in the forest, gasping with fear.  
They do not even keep so much as a pin.  
They hasten homewards through the brush.  
By the shortest road.  
For three days it is impossible to eat.  
Chao-un-Vico's face is no longer human (fear has distorted his features).

"It seems that this refrain was sung whenever Sanousit, 563  
175\*